to uniform specifications prescribed by the Government of India. A & B category foodgrains conforming to PFA standards are issued for Public Distribution System in the country. In the market, foodgrains of different varieties and quality standards as per the preference of consumers are available at different prices. There is not proposal under consideration with the Government to set up a National Market of foodgrains.

Rise in prices of foodgrains

95. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the rise in prices of foodgrains (rice, wheat, pulses) from July 1991 to June 1995; year-wise; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to safeguard the interests of the common people from the adverse effects of price rise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) A statement showing the variation in wholesale Prices Indices of foodgrains (rice, wheat, pulses) for the period from july, 1991 to June, 1995 is enclosed (*see* blelow),

(b) The Government has accorded the highest priority for containing the price levels in general and the price levels of essential items in particular. Food Corporation of India has stepped up the open market sale operations of rice and wheat at selected Centres. The Revamped Public Distribution System is in operation since 1992, through which rice and wheat are being supplied at rates lower than the open market prices. In the case of pulses, apart from taking measures to increase the domestic production of pulses, the Government has permitted the import of pulses under OGL to augment the supply and make them available to common man at reasonable prices. The custom duty on import of pulses has also been reduced from 10 percent to 5 percent to augment the imports. Pulses are also being supplied through the retail outlets of cooperative stores, Kendriya Bhandar and State Civil Supplies Corporation.

Statement

Percentage variation in the wholesale price index number of foodgrains between 1991 July and 1995 June (yearwise)

Commodity	Percentage variation between July and June			
	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Rice	+29.0	−0.6	+44.9	+8.7
Wheat	+27.5	+7.7	+11.8	−1.0
Pulses (Sub-Group)	+5.4	+4.6	+25.6	+17.1